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LAVERNA VISION

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Spring 2008 edition

The TAU in Africa

We Franciscans are people of the TAU. We are people of Transformation, Action, and Unity

We take our rule and our commissions seriously but we take ourselves rather lightly. We strive to preach the Gospel and use words if necessary. So what does “preaching the Gospel without words” look like?

It looks like the Tau in Africa. Don Ryder and his good friend Romey Wagner recently returned from Kenya, East Africa. They represented the Secular Franciscans and people who contributed to the effort to bring life-giving water to the Maasai tribe. Because of your work on the “I Thirst” Cookbook and the Kenya Water Project, the Maasai now have their own borehole (well) and no longer have to walk 15 miles one-way to get contaminated and stagnant water from a hole shared with wild animals.

The 430 feet deep borehole, a major aquifer, is expected to serve up to 6,000 people and 100,000 head of their livestock. The Maasai are so grateful and say, “THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.”

At the borehole site, Don and Romey formally turned over the responsibility of the borehole to the Maasai’s newly formed “Water Committee”

Continued on page 5



Don Ryder with Maasai
herdsmen in Kenya



Maasai children drinking
fresh well water

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MEET THE LAVERNA REGIONAL EXECUTIVE ELECTION CANDIDATES

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TREASURER: PATRICIA YATES, PETER BEKKERS

SECRETARY: KATHY SUTLIFF, PATRICIA YATES

DISTRICT COUNCILORS: JIM CARLSON, PETER BEKKERS, PATRICIA YATES, and BOB HENNING

See page 6 for nominee biographies



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The LaVerna Region of the Secular Franciscan Order in the USA consists of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan. The area is divided into four districts: Southeast, Central, Fox Valley and Upper Michigan. *La Verna Vision* is a vehicle of communication with the LaVerna Region. It presents a forum for presenting information and insights that relate to the SFO way of life. Permission to copy materials printed in *LaVerna Vision* is freely given except where the copyright is specifically reserved to the author or artist. Please credit *LaVerna Vision* if you copy any of the articles

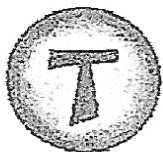
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LaVerna Vision editor – Ed Boss, ed-joann@execpc.com



REFLECTIONS

Regional Spiritual Assistant
Lester Bach OFM Cap

IDENTITY

During this continuing period of transition for the SFO (since 1978) we face interesting and important issues. For years the SFO developed many elements of a devotional life. We focused on Stations of the Cross, the Franciscan Crown and the Rosary, individual devotions to Francis and Clare and other saints. We treasure devotions common to individual cultures. We are influenced by Lourdes and Fatima. Many religious TV programs have their particular influence.

Devoted to the Church, the SFO has a sense of loyalty with a readiness to spread the faith. We serve the Church as lectors, communion ministers, and do things needed in a local parish. However, our perspective may be limited to Church ministries and issues.

The Rule of 1978 invites us to add a fresh perspective to our dedication to the SFO. We are called to move beyond the local Church and fraternity to the wider world. We are called to serve people by our dedication to the poor, our readiness to help people who are marginalized, to embrace people rejected by others, to seek ways of peace and justice throughout our world, to develop ministries that move beyond fraternity and parish life to people even beyond our own country. The Rule asked us to create a more *fraternal and evangelical world*. (Article 14)

The NEC created commissions to help us in "secular" matters. However, administrative developments alone cannot create in us a universal mindset of compassion. Commissions helped, but at times their administration became burdensome. NEC streamlined their role and opened the door for change in our ministries in the world and the issues we face there (FAN / JPIC).

Some past perspectives about the SFO may continue to dominate our view of the SFO way of life. To seek the common good is a scriptural call. As St. Paul puts it: *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* (1 Corinthians 12:7) We may limit ourselves to local issues - to submit a good annual report, to be assured that we are doing things "right." We send money to far-off places while SFO "needs" go unmet through a diminished "fair share" contribution.

None of this is surprising. Balancing "needs" is never easy. Councils need to take time to find ways to meet primary SFO responsibilities as well as sharing beyond local boundaries.

SO WHAT?

Nothing we have mentioned is bad or wrong. In many instances things are simply incomplete. We do not ask Secular Franciscans to discard devotions nor develop more administrative tools. But being Secular Franciscans colors our perspective about secular issues. Reflect on your answers to the following questions. You or your fraternity may need to make changes in your viewpoints and perspectives.

1. What is more important in our Franciscan life - devotions or apostolic ministries? Why?

2. How well do you and your local fraternity relate to the regional, national and international SFO fraternities? If poorly, what will you do about it?

3. Prayer is important. But St James (James 2:14-17) writes that faith, isolated from serving people, is hardly good stuff for believers. Evaluate your personal and fraternity integration of prayer-life and ministry-life?

4. Do your regular fraternity gatherings stimulate Franciscan life? What should it do for you and the members? If it is failing, what are you doing about it?

5. Does the Secular Franciscan Order suffer while you send money all around the world? How do you balance your giving (personally and as a fraternity) so that the SFO can continue its work and ministries?

6. How well does your Franciscan dedication help you influence people, policies and problems in your life in the world? Is your Franciscan dedication so strong that it naturally shows itself 24/7 in the way you live? Explain how!

7. VERY IMPORTANT! Does your fraternity's initial formation program prepare candidates to **understand and implement the entire SFO Rule and Constitutions**? Profession requires such understanding! Do you personally understand and implement the SFO Rule? If not, what will you do about both these situations?

8. How is our Franciscan life different from the call of other people to different forms of life? Share your ideas on the "heart" of our way of life!

Let no one be provoked to anger or scandal through you. but may everyone be drawn to peace, kindness, and harmony through your gentleness. For we have been called to this: to heal the wounded, bind up the broken, and recall the erring.

*Legend of the Three Companions - Chapter XIV
Francis of Assisi - The Founder - Page 102*

ECOLOGY: *What Does 'Green' Mean?*



Judy Stouffer, SFO

What does 'green' mean, when you're looking for environmentally responsible products? It sounds like a straightforward question.

The answer, unfortunately, is, "it depends."

Does 'green' mean that a product is made from recycled materials? Or is something green only if the manufacturer used minimal non-renewable resources in its creation? Does 'green' mean that the product is non-toxic? Are 'green' items only those that come entirely from post-consumer waste?

Is that 'green' product you're buying really healthy? Or has the manufacturer played a shell game and eliminated the chemicals that are regulated by law, and substituted in equally toxic chemicals that aren't tracked - yet.

Are your recycled products really helping the environment by reusing something that would otherwise go into a landfill? Or is the manufacturer using chemicals for the recycling process that will enter the groundwater and cause endocrine disruption in fish and put 'gender bending' chemicals into our drinking water so that our children grow up infertile? Is it actually more expensive (in terms of energy use, and impact on the environment and on workers) to create a product from recycled materials than to use fresh new materials?

DETERMINING WHAT'S 'GREEN' ISN'T STRAIGHTFORWARD AT ALL

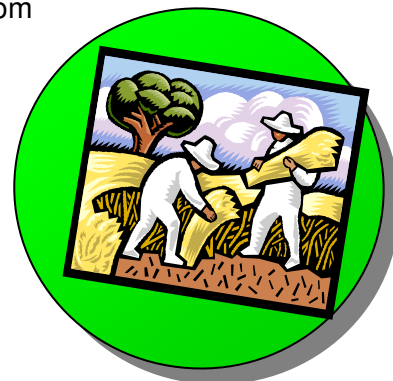
So, what can we look for when we're trying to make choices that are environmentally sound?

When you're buying products, from toothpaste to shingles, and cars to computers, asking yourself the following questions can help you choose items that are safer for you and for our environment, too.

1. Does the item contain anything that you think is unhealthy?
2. Is there a way to recycle the unused portions of the product, or (if it's something like a computer or cell phone) is there a way to dispose of it when it's outlived its lifetime other than tossing it into the trash?
3. If it can be made from a renewable resource, was it?
4. If it's made from recycled materials, was it created using environmentally safe recycling techniques?
5. What is the product's environmental impact throughout its life-cycle, from its inception to its disposal?
6. Is the product available from a manufacturer whose workers are protected from personal harm while creating the product?
7. Is the product available from someone who makes it locally?

Don't be deceived by manufacturers' claims that products they are selling are somehow better because the manufacturer stamps a marketing slogan on the packaging that says it is 'natural' or 'green.' Buying that package of paper made from virgin fiber can be better for you, and better for the environment, than an equivalent package of 'recycled' paper, depending on how the paper was made.

Decide for yourself what makes sense, and then vote for wise environmental stewardship with your product purchases. And if you find it difficult to sort out which choices are really environmentally smart, you're in good company.



As Kermit the Frog always said, "It isn't easy being green!"

(c) Judy Stouffer 2008

The TAU in Africa



Before the well was drilled, Massai women walked 15 miles to gather river water for cooking and cleaning.



and empowered them to develop policies and procedures for the on-going operation and maintenance of the water system. Is this action not giving flesh to our Peace & Justice commission?

And what about our Ecology commission --- does that fit in here any place?

Now that they have water, they were encouraged to learn drip irrigation farming in order to begin growing fruits and vegetables to better balance their primarily protein diet, since they are pastoralists and rely on their cattle for food.

At the well site, the chief with members of the tribe planted two trees. Since that time, we have learned that the Maasai children have planted over 40 trees. This is very significant in the semi-arid conditions of the Rift Valley. Yes, these actions help restore and protect the environment as our Franciscan Ecology states.



Massai tribal livestock herders

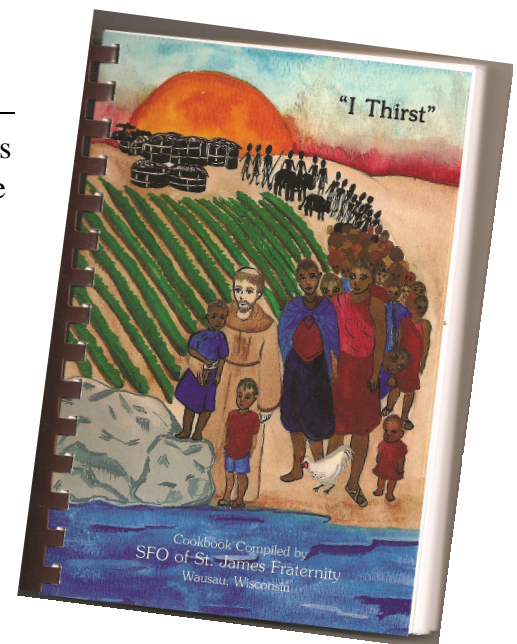
If you wish to contribute and continue with this effort, you can donate to the **Community Foundation of North Central Wisconsin**, either by check or online. Checks may be sent to the Foundation at: 500 Third Street, Suite 310, Wausau, WI 54403. Be sure to write **Kenya Water Project** on the memo line of the check. For online contributions, you may go to their website at www.cfoncw.org and follow the instructions. Thank you.



What's Cooking? by Mary Ann Mizwinski, SFO The St. James Fraternity, Wausau, has complied "**I Thirst**" a 600 cookbook recipe collection from more than 100 contributions including Secular Franciscans, family, and friends of the LaVerna Region, as well as some recipes from Africa and the Maasai people.

The cover design and dividers were done by Janessa Hintz, high school student and granddaughter of Marion Schroers, SFO. All cookbook proceeds go to the Kenya Water Project, which will enable the Maasai people to drill a well and lay a clean water system to 6,000 people and their animals.

For further questions about the **I Thirst** recipe collection please call Mary Ann at (715) 842-8737 or e-mail address: fluffy1946@charter.net



Secular Franciscan HIGH TECH STUFF

Most of you are familiar with Internet usage but do you know about You Tube?

hint: type in...www.youtube.com



And experiment a little. Watch some of your fellow SFOs presentations on You Tube. This site is not just for people under 21-years old. Franciscans are using this website for their testimony, profession history, and book review discernments. Also, You Tube can be your virtual tool for Franciscan recruitment, too. Neat stuff. And...Don't forget to click on to our own LaVerna Regional website at www.rc.net/sfo/laverna. Our *Vision* newsletter will be posted on the same

LaVerna site, and you may also click onto other Franciscan links. You can go from Wisconsin sites all the way to Vatican City.

Happy Clicking. ☺

BOOK REVIEW: ***St. Francis and the Cross***

by Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap and Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini

This little book (137 pages) subtitled “Reflections on Suffering, Weakness, and Joy,” consists of a sprinkling of jeweled clips from essays delivered at a three-day retreat for priests held February 2000 at the basilica in LaVerna, Italy. It can be said with certainty that the “strong” words presented will interest many people and help sustain their Christian lives.

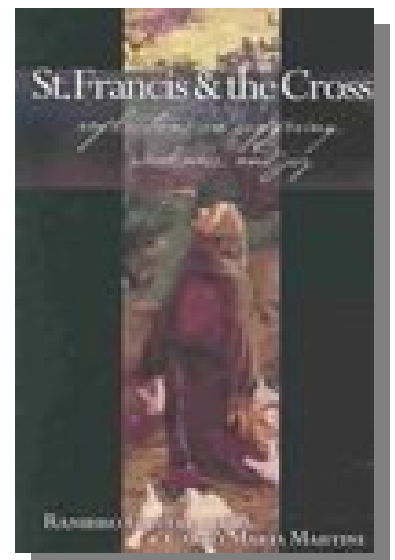
The first part is named: “*The Lord Has Put a New Song in My Mouth, A Song of Praise to Our God*,” (Psalm 40:3) by Franco Gallivanone, director of the Instituto Sacerdotale Maria Immacolata in Milan. He explains how St. Francis experienced a fundamental transition in his life, afflicted by illness, blindness, and trials. He continues with some very handy meditation points, as: “Seeking the Lord in Times of Trial,” and “Resistance and the Gift of New Communion.”

Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, retired archbishop of Milan, presents “*Man’s Wisdom and Power, God’s Weakness and Foolishness*,” an overwhelming topic of obedience and resistance to the Word of the Cross. Cardinal Martini reviews the key to human existence as well as the essence of the gospel and our faith.

Fr. Cantalamessa describes the circumstances of the concept of St. Francis’ *Canticle of Creatures* and “**All Praise Be Yours, My Lord, Through All That You Have Made.**” He writes on Francis’ meditations of Canticle of Creation and his Testament, calling us to allow the beauty of creation that draws us to Christ and open us to love.

Fr. Cantalamessa pursues Francis’ inclination to the mystery and beauty reflections on music and song. Has there ever been a more powerful song than Francis’s love for the cross, poverty, Eucharist, and God’s Word?

Fr. Cantalamessa examines the contrast between the vocabulary of wisdom, power, and knowledge and the vocabulary of foolishness, scandal and weakness. The essays are easy to comprehend and they provide the source for many meditations – a perfect companion for Eucharistic Adoration.



Book Review written by Ed Multhauf, SFO, St. Paschal Baylon Fraternity, Wind Lake, WI

LAVERNA REGIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTION CANDIDATES - BIOGRAPHIES

KATHY SUTLIFF

I was professed on November 3, 1991. Since that time I have been active in my local fraternity, St. John Neumann, Rhinelander. I have been Minister, Vice Minister and currently put together the monthly fraternity bulletin.

In 2003 I was asked and served to be acting regional secretary and elected in 2005. My greatest challenge has been to update the regional membership list and keep the NAFRA data base updated with our membership information. We still have a way to go on this issue, due to many members in inactive fraternities, but have made great progress. I would like to continue this effort and find a way for the new council to reach-out to these folks.

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### **PETER J. BEKKERS**

Born in Combined Locks, WI on 9/25/34 and grew up in the Fox Valley area where I lived all my life. I married Carol on 10/5/57 and together we raised eight children: three girls and five boys. All of them are now married and have blessed us with 17 grandchildren ranging in age from 21 years down to 2 years (4 of whom are adopted). Carol and I were professed at St. Joseph's Church in Appleton on 5/15/60 and have been active for most of the time, except when we were raising our children. (We had to pull back from some of our outside activities.) Since our children are now grown, we have again become involved with the SFO. For over 12 years, Carol and I have edited the "Crossed Arms," our fraternity monthly newsletter. Six years ago, I was elected as councilor to the LaVerna Regional Executive Council, and two and one half years ago, I was elected as Regional Treasurer. I've grown much through this experience.

I have spent my business life in the accounting profession, working for several companies. I took early retirement in 1990 to devote my efforts to my own business as a tax professional doing personal and corporate taxes. I sold my business in January 1998 and agreed to work for the buyer for an additional five years, until retirement in May 2003. I am a charter member of (NATP) the "National Association of Tax Professionals," and was invited to attend their 25th anniversary conference in San Francisco in July 2004, where I was presented with several awards and recognized as one of its founders.

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PATRICIA D. YATES

Certified Public Accountant and business owner. I have been a CPA for many years and worked in a CPA office in California for at least eight years, at which time the owner made me a partner. We worked together until 1980, when I moved to Wisconsin. I became a Catholic in April 1987 through the RCIA program at St. Peter the Fisherman Parish in Eagle River. I became a Secular Franciscan in November 2002 and St. John Neumann's Fraternity treasurer since January 2006.

Presently, I own two active businesses: Conservatorships Plus, Inc., a corporation that handles guardianships, conservatorships, and representative payee service for Social Security for 52 people. The corporation is duly licensed to handle 60 guardianships by the state of Wisconsin; Patricia D. Yates, Inc., which is a tax preparation corporation that presently handles about 250 income tax returns annually.

In past years, I have had the privilege to serve in various capacities with the California Accountant's Society, including the President, Secretary and Treasurer. In Wisconsin I have had the privilege of serving as a member of the Wisconsin Society of Accountants. I can serve as Treasurer or Councilor for the LaVerna Region, my local fraternity, and my community. I love serving as a Secular Franciscan and will (if elected) do my best. If there is any regional position that needs a candidate, and you feel that I could fulfill the position, I would be happy to run for that position. As with St. Francis, it will be my joy to serve wherever needed.

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### **BOB HENNING**

Born - 03/28/47. Married in 1970 to Mary Jane and live in Gwinn, MI. We have 3 children, 16 grandchildren.

Served in US Army for 21 years, retired in 1987. Manager of a Calibration Laboratory in Gwinn, MI. Current member of St. Anthony of Padua Church and serve as parish lector, Eucharistic minister, and over 25 years involvement in parish religious education programs.

Professed November, 6, 1996. Served as St. Anthony Fraternity Vice-Minister and Secretary. Currently serve as fraternity Formation Director. Serving on the LaVerna Regional Council as Councilor for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. I love spending time with my wonderful wife, our children and our grandchildren. My interests are reading, researching, computers and football - especially when the Bears are playing. (As you see, I also have a sense of humor, to mention the Bears in Packer land!) I also like quiet times, taking car rides with Mary Jane and taking lots of pictures.

~~~~~

JAMES L. CARLSON Born 1/24/44. Current address: 236 S. Elizabeth Street, Whitewater, WI. Single/never married.

Occupation: Circuit Judge, Walworth County, 28 years. Member of St. Patrick Catholic Church, Whitewater. Past member and chair, Parish Council - 13 years. Past trustee - 10 years. Involved in parish activity as lector, human concerns, delegateto *Juntos Caninando*, countywide ministry to Hispanic community. Archdiocese of Milwaukee: past member and chairman of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

Pastoral Council-4 years; currently a parish delegate to the APC District committee. Co-Lay Director, *Milwaukee Cursillo*.

Professed November 2001 and member of St. Pascal Baylon Fraternity, Wind Lake, WI. Current Fraternity Minister and Youth/Young Adult Commissioner, St. Paschal Baylon for five years. LaVerna Regional all Commissions Coordinator-three years and Regional Councilor-Fox Valley District-three years.

KEN BEATTIE

Professed Franciscan for 39 years. Presently the Regional Minister of LaVerna Region. Ken was one of the members of the formatting council for regionalization in La Verna, Minister Pro-Tem for the region and elected as Minister for three terms. Ken is one of the founding members of the Portiuncula Fraternity, serving as its minister and presently the vice-minister. He has served in varied roles with the local fraternity councils throughout the years.

Ken has been the chairperson for the NAFRA Peace Award Committee for the past six years and presently on the team for this award. Served with NAFRA on the Ecumenical Committee and is serving as a commissioner with the Franciscan Action Network that is a Peace Justice and Integrity of Creation Action that multiple Franciscan Orders have joined together with offices in Washington D.C.

Ken worked as a nurse for 36 years and taught special education in the public school system. Retired from the nursing position and has moved to Sheboygan, Wisconsin, with his wife and daughter.

JEAN PLATZ

Member of St. John Neumann Fraternity, and parish member of Nativity of our Lord, Rhinelander. Professed 1951. Recipient of the National Third Order Achievement Award in 1966. Served as local fraternity Minister, Vice Minister, Treasurer and current Formation Director. Provincial Minister for 3 years. LaVerna Regional council positions: Vice Minister, and current Director of Formation. *LaVerna Vision* editor for 3 years.

Graduate from Alverno College School of Nursing. Volunteer medical activities in South Vietnam, Liberia. In the USA, Jean's volunteer activities are working with: free clinic, food pantry, domestic violence shelter, hospital mental health unit, and Marywood Spirituality Center. Former Eucharistic Minister and lector; organized parish nurse program; currently works as a presenter for annual pre-marriage retreats. Single and retired RN.

Minister's Thoughts by Ken Beattie, SFO

As we approach our LaVerna Regional Chapter in Marathon this year (June 20 – 22), I reflected on what might inspire us into service. I couldn't present a better expression of giving of ourselves than Don Derozier's thoughtful article published in his *Crossed Arms* February 2008 fraternity newsletter.

He writes about a most appropriate assessment in regards to commitments. Not only should we make commitments and strive daily to carry them out, by giving in a monetary value, but also giving in a physical service in our communities and our society at large. We keep in mind those who are the less fortunate in our society.

We are called to serve in so many ways – do we hear and respond with: “**Here I am Lord, what is it you ask of me!**” Don has come across some very fine thoughts as noted from their fraternal newsletter.

TIME-TALENT-TREASURE: An SFO Perspective by Don Derozier

Tax time can be a positive or negative experience. As we lay out our receipts, bills, and credit card vouchers and bank balances, we are reminded of at least two things:

- One, that the good life of a citizen in the USA cost money
- Two, that we are not always good stewards of the gifts given to us by God

TIME-TALENT-TREASURE: An SFO Perspective

Stewardship is a biblical concept addressed by Moses in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament. The basic idea seems to be this: God has everything and gifts us a portion of it; we have nothing so it is right to give Him thanks for the gifts and be like Him in gifting others.

As our Fraternity Council dug into budget and planning for 2008, it reflected upon the many requests for money that come from benevolent and religious organizations. Missions, schools, diocesan and parish groups all compete for the treasure part of stewardship. Sometimes it seems that we are only worth our net worth!

How can we as Professed Secular Franciscans address these requests? Can we assert the value of time and talent as equal to treasure in the building up of the kingdom through gospel living? How might we envision stewardship as Franciscans?

Those of us who wear glasses know how much clearer things are when they are on our faces and not on the dresser! It is our duty to put them on, however, since they do not have a mind of their own.

So too, stewardship issues become clearer when we put on our Franciscan glasses. For example, when we professed we said, "Yes, this is what I want," to the question of binding ourselves more closely to the work "intently to rebuild the ecclesial community" of the Church by means of the Order. In response, the minister said, "... you now pledge yourselves to spend your efforts to make the fraternity a genuine ecclesial assembly and a living Franciscan community." What does all this mean?

In terms of stewardship, we ought to look at all requests for time-talent-treasure through the Franciscan glasses of our local Fraternity, the larger community of our Order. Much as the First and Second Orders apply their Rules to management of physical and human resources, we should emulate them as "Seculars".

We can unselfishly consider these questions: **How much time have I pledged to my Order and Fraternity in gratitude to God for Francis and his gospel way of life?**

What talents have I pledged to my Order and Fraternity for the glorification of God and the edification of His people?

How much treasure have I pledged to my Order and Fraternity for the building up of God's Kingdom in the manner of St. Francis and for the maintenance of my Franciscan family?

As professed members of an Order and a Fraternity, we should be on our Franciscan glasses to see more clearly the stewardship issues that confront us and to prioritize them in the light of gospel living according to St. Francis.

Remember the old saying, "Charity begins at home?"

Don Derozier, SFO - Minister
Sacred Heart Fraternity, Oshkosh

YOUR OPINION

Most of us have a short quip or opinion that needs to surface – to get out and share. Did you read something in the *LaVerna Vision*, TAU magazine, or scripture passage that needs further thought or constructive criticism? Think of **YOUR OPINION** as a *brief editorial* comment similar to your local newspaper. Sound off about something beneficial to the Franciscan community! Your comment is valuable and should be just that: an opinion short and to the point.



Your view may be one, two or three paragraphs and will be printed in the next newsletter edition. This is your time to make your voice heard to other Franciscans. For example, how has your formation material worked in your fraternity? Do the textbooks writing styles sound too preaching and telling? What recommendations do you have? Or, what good ideas does the region need to rally around in 2008/ 2009? Send your thoughts to the *LaVerna Vision* editor, attn: Ed Boss. The e-mail address is located on the bottom of page two.

Pax et Bonum.

FRANCISCAN ACTION NETWORK

Transforming the World in the Spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare Franciscans “Launch” Inspirational Social Change Network

--New Level of Public Action Envisioned

March 8, 2008; Washington, DC—With spiritual and social transformation on their mind, more than 130 representatives of the new social advocacy organization, Franciscan Action Network, celebrated a transformation of their own—one from shared ideas to joint reality. Michael Perry, OFM, formerly with *Franciscans International*, was one of the evening’s two keynote speakers. Fr. Perry, a friar from the Sacred Heart Province in the nation’s heartland, touched on the theme of an idea whose time has already come.

“Much like the Franciscan movement of the 12th and 13th centuries, the Franciscan Action Network arises at a particularly critical moment in the course of human history,” said Fr. Perry. “It comes at a moment when the future of the planet and its inhabitants is being decided.”

Fr. Perry put the nascent network, called “FAN,” into this context of a world in crisis, a world in need of faith-based innovation. The speaker implied that partnership with the UN-based non-governmental agency, FI, and other like-minded non-profit organizations, would be a part of the new network’s overall strategy.



FAN’s kickoff celebration, slated as a halftime event at Ecumenical Advocacy Days (EAD), underscored another part of that strategy. From March 7 - 10, EAD played host not only to FAN, but to over seven hundred other religious advocates in a weekend that culminated in 250 visits to congressional legislators on Capitol Hill. During the visits, EAD participants from all religious denominations advocated for a truer vision of security, one based on human and ecological well-being rather than fear and mistrust.

“It is just this type of integrated awareness—of faith with social responsibility—that our new network seeks to facilitate,” said Russell Testa, executive director of FAN. Mr. Testa, a layperson, cited the support of fellow ecumenical leaders as crucial to the organization’s ability to realize its full potential.

“Many people don’t know it, but St. Francis was ecumenically-minded, to employ a modern term,” he said.

“In reaching out to a leader of the Muslim faith by traveling to Egypt and Syria during the 13th century, Francis demonstrated the kind of moral courage from which we hope to draw inspiration.” Mr. Testa said that FAN is dedicated to bringing a Franciscan approach to Christian-based social advocacy. Over the next few years as it grows, FAN will help the more than 450 Franciscan ministries in the U.S. organize their efforts at advocacy by amplifying their voices for greater effectiveness and impact. Franciscan orders comprise the largest religious body in the Catholic Church. Drawing inspiration from leaders as diverse as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr.--and especially from St. Francis’ and St. Clare’s effort to follow Jesus Christ--many of FAN’s new members echoed that same sentiment during the weekend-long EAD event. One Episcopalian Franciscan who stopped by the FAN booth before heading back to Delaware put it this way: “When we are united by urgent need, our differences have a way of falling by the wayside,” she said.

For more information on the Franciscan Action Network, contact: Peter Sloan P.O. Box 29053, Washington, DC 20017, telephone: (202) 527-7564 or e-mail: sloan@franciscanaction.org



Sr. Sheila Kinsey, OSF, Dean Tom Bello, SFO, Fr. Michael Perry, OFM and Fr. Larry Dumphy, OFM lead the FAN community in prayer and reflection as Franciscans seek change.

FORMATION EVENTS & THOUGHTS

This summer make plans to attend a **Seminar on Developing Servant Leadership** by Cecilia Maljan, SFO and Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR. (Fr. Kevin made a visitation to our June 2007 LaVerna Chapter in Marathon) The leadership seminar will be held Thursday evening, June 26 through Sunday noon, June 29, 2008 at Saint Francis University, Loretto, PA.



The National Executive Council of NAFRA strongly encourages Secular Franciscans from around the country to hear Fr. Bernie Tickerhoof, TOR and Anne Mulqueen, SFO discuss “Developing of Lay Leadership in the Secular Franciscan Order,” one of the most recognized concerns at all levels of the Order. Topics include: Discernment Gifts; Basic Choices; Servant Leadership; Listening (Compassion & Empathy); Decision Making; Crisis & Conflict; and Leadership Development & Training.

The total cost for the weekend is \$210 single, and \$170 double, which includes room, meals, campus shuttle, and registration fee. This seminar is for all SFOs, not only those currently in leadership roles. This is another opportunity to be with our Franciscan brothers and sisters from different parts of the country. If you have questions about the seminar, please contact Fr. Kevin Queally, TOR, (814) 472-3367 or e-mail kqueally@francis.edu.

If you would like a registration form, please contact Cecilia Maljan, SFO at cylmaljan@earthlink.net.

THE RULE by Jean Platz, SFO, LaVerna Regional Formation Director

We hear about the THE RULE frequently. We discuss topics relative to our Rule at initial and ongoing formation, but I wonder how often we actually read the Rule. Do you carry a copy of the Rule with you or keep it at your bedside as a daily reading reminder?

At profession we “*promise to live all the days of my life Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order by observing* frequent reading of the Rule, how can we promise to lives? Frequent, if not daily reading of the Rule is to live the gospels. Following the Rule is our daily

In The Leader’s Guide for the book, Capturing the (pages 50-54), the authors suggest making Rule living the Rule. It involves making a card for each decorating it in a manner that is meaningful to you. card to focus on and meditate on for a pre-selected length of combined with journaling your insights and sharing them with a group. It’s a fun activity that could be done as a group at a Fraternity gathering. See the Leaders Guide for a more detailed description of the activity.



the gospel of our Lord Jesus its Rule of life.” Without observe it “all the days” of our essential. It’s our guide as we try challenge.

Spirit of Francis and Clare cards which can help us focus on article of the abbreviated Rule and Then you can periodically select a time (1 to 2 weeks). This can be

THE RULE IS OUR GUIDE. READ, Live, AND LOVE It!

The SFO NATIONAL FORMATION WORKSHOP will be held at the Pallottine Center in Florissant, MO, May 15 -18. Florissant, MO is located just outside of St. Louis. Jean Platz has mailed out the registration forms and agenda to all LaVerna Regional formation leaders, but all SFO’s are welcome to attend. The workshop will be presented by the National Formation Commission, and their agenda will cover “What is Formation?” This is an important event to learn from Secular Franciscans Teresa Baker and Jan Parker, and Fr. Richard Terzza, OFM, about how to plan your local fraternity programs. For registration or further information for this event, please contact Jean Platz at (715) 362-6562. See you there.

Regional and National Calendar of Events

- **APRIL 5** **Fox Valley District Gathering**, Manitowoc
- **APRIL 19** **Central Wisconsin District Gathering**, Stevens Point
- **MAY 3** **Regional Council Meeting**, Green Bay
- **MAY 15-18** **SFO National Formation Workshop**, Florissant, MO
- **JUNE 20-22** **Regional Chapter and Election**, Marathon, St Anthony Retreat Center. (all are encouraged to attend with Fraternity Ministers.)
- **JUNE 26-29** **Summer Seminar on Developing Servant Leadership**, St. Francis University, Loretto, PA.
- **OCTOBER 4** **Guest Speaker Fr. John Dear, SJ, Holy Family Catholic Church**, Woodruff, WI. Called to a life to follow Jesus and Francis, peace and justice activist Fr. John Dear will talk on how we can take another step forward on the path to welcome a new world without war, poverty or nuclear weapons. This presentation is sponsored by the Marywood Franciscan Spirituality Center. For further information, or pre-register, call (715) 385-3750. Seminar hours: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.